

# Psychosocial needs of breast cancer patients and their relatives

Citation for published version (APA):

Schmid Büchi, S. (2010). *Psychosocial needs of breast cancer patients and their relatives*. [Doctoral Thesis, Maastricht University]. Datawyse / Universitaire Pers Maastricht.  
<https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20101022ss>

**Document status and date:**

Published: 01/01/2010

**DOI:**

[10.26481/dis.20101022ss](https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20101022ss)

**Document Version:**

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

**Please check the document version of this publication:**

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## **Psychosocial needs of breast cancer patients and their relatives**

Silvia Schmid Büchi

1. Identifying more vulnerable breast cancer patients and their close relatives and establishing their unmet care needs is highly relevant for the caring process (this dissertation).
2. The cancer and treatment-related symptoms of breast cancer patients require strategies for recognition, assessment and management of these symptoms during periods of treatment as well as after these treatments (this dissertation).
3. The most important predictors for unmet needs of breast cancer patients and their close relatives are the patients' treatment related symptom burden, the patients' and their close relatives' distress, anxiety and conflicts in their interpersonal relationship (this dissertation).
4. Close relatives of breast cancer patients often have higher levels of anxiety and distress than the patients themselves as well as a high need for information and access to health care professionals (this dissertation).
5. Close relatives of cancer patients need recognition and professional support for their role as caregivers and for the management of their own cancer-related problems and emotional burden (this dissertation).
6. More specialized breast care nurses are needed to provide specific knowledge and expertise for Swiss breast care centers and to provide comprehensive care and support for patients and their close relatives.
7. National standards for clinical practice regarding the patients' symptom management, the support of patients and their relatives in coping with psychological problems and the enhancement of the interpersonal relationship between patients and relatives, should be developed and implemented in the Swiss system for breast cancer care.
8. Refined scientific models are necessary to improve the understanding of cancer patients' and their relatives' needs and to identify patients and close relatives with unmet needs.
9. Nurses need both scientific knowledge to improve clinical practice as well as sensitivity to individualize the patients' and relatives' care.
10. Nursing science gives nurses a voice.
11. For the majority of doctoral candidates, relatives are the most important source for psychosocial support.